"It Can be Done"

A TRUE STORY

by

Sol Rothschild

BROOKLYN
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Form Bo. 100M 1-31 E

January 13, 1926

To my Friend

Grant E. Scott

14 Nov '8

With my many good wishes

Sincerely,

Sol Rothschild

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_SO-ABG-063

"IT CAN BE DONE"

A True Story

SOL ROTHSCHILD

BROOKLYN
PUBLIC LIBRARY

BROOKLYN
PUBLIC LIBRARY

SOL ROTHSCHILD

From a drawing by Knickerbocker Studio of New York—March 21, 1925

"IT CAN BE DONE"

A True Story

BY

SOL ROTHSCHILD

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

NELLIE REVELL

Illustrated

M 2716550

DUNHILL PUBLISHING CO.
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

R
B
R8472

Copyright, 1925
DUNHILL PUBLISHING CO.

Printed in the United States of America

DEDICATED

TO MY DEAR

MOTHER AND FATHER

WHOSE EVERLASTING AND UNTIRING EFFORTS

WERE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE

FOR MY FINDING OUT THAT

"IT CAN BE DONE"

"IT CAN BE DONE"

INTRODUCTION

ONE spring morning a year ago a friend suggested, what she termed, an errand of mercy for me. Sol Rothschild, a Brooklyn boy, was fighting much the same battle I had gone through—a battle against the bodily pain and mental agony engendered by an injured spine.

"Perhaps," she said, "you will be able to cheer him up."

But at the end of my journey across the bridge, I found that Sol Rothschild needed no cheering up. Paralyzed from the waist down he may have been, but his smile, his courage, his patience and his will to win were still functioning normally. Though an automobile crash the year before had

affected the backbone of his body, it had only served to stiffen the backbone of his mind.

It was my hope to strengthen his morale that day by telling him of my own uphill drive to victory. I do not know if I did help him; he said that I did. But I am sure that he helped me. My affliction had been many

months in coming on. When it struck finally, I had lived through many happy years of work and achievement. I had many memories to console me. I had had long years to build up a character and a philosophy that would help to carry me through. And had the end been then, the world would have owed me nothing.

But here was a boy, whose

life, little more than begun, had spread out long and fair before him. He had been given time hardly to form his dreams and ambitions, much less realize them. And suddenly, with the skidding crash of an automobile, all those fair prospects vanished from his sight soon after his early twenties.

His doctors saw little hope

for him just as mine saw little hope for me. He was left, not only to rebuild his life but to preserve it. He has done both and each day sees him growing better and better. Even his doctors now admit that the day is coming when he will walk once again.

As I listened to him talk that day, as I read this manuscript over, I began to see that

in Sol Rothschild I had found one of those rare souls with the qualities that place man only a little lower than the angels. A fighting personality, yet a happy one; a man who thought for himself yet who could see the rightness of others' thinking; a cool mind yet a warm heart; the epitome of uncomplaining bravery yet one who could take the offen-

sive when that was necessary; a perfect balance of all the powers that are so inspiring in their use yet so repellant in their abuse.

The message in this book is summed up in the title, "It Can Be Done," and the perusal of every line brings that truth closer home. To me, who took the same slogan as a lodestar all through my illness,

the book has been an inspiration. It should serve as the same inspiration to all the world, sick or well, rich or poor, for its author is living, breathing proof that no matter what burden life puts upon us,

IT CAN BE DONE!

NELLIE REVELL.

New York City,
March 30, 1925.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

FOREWORD

When you're down and out and
feelin' blue,
Think of the fellow next to you.
If he gave up, where would he be?
He's fightin' and winnin', don't you
see?

WITH this thought in mind I began to write this book. What first prompted me was the realization that so many people who could win their battles lose them because

they give up before they start.

If I can but impart to you this message: It Can Be Done, then the efforts I have put into this book will not have been in vain.

S. R.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION BY NELLIE REVELL	ix
	FOREWORD	xix
CHAPTER		
I.	BEFORE	27
II.	I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY	39
III.	THE FIRST FIVE NIGHTS	63
IV.	DAYS THAT FOLLOWED	75
V.	EVERYBODY I KNEW	123
VI.	WHEN THE DOCTORS COULDN'T, I COULD	131
VII.	GOOD TIMES AHEAD	141
VIII.	DETERMINATION	157
IX.	DOCTOR NATURE	169
X.	COURAGE AND ITS REWARD	177
XI.	TO MY DOCTORS PAST AND PRESENT	187
XII.	A POSITIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE	195
XIII.	THANK GOD	201
XIV.	BE AN OPTIMIST	207
XV.	WHEN I REFLECT	215

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

March 21, 1925—Knickerbocker Studio ..... *Frontispiece*

PAGE

Grace G. Drayton 33

Harry Hershfield 55

Milt Gross 73

Jack Callahan 99

Rube Goldberg 119

Ken Kling 137

Al Zere 161

Chic Young 193

J. W. McGurk 213

A SINCERE THANKS

To the world's foremost cartoonists who illustrated this book. To Nellie Revell, who wrote the introduction, and to my many friends who helped to make this book possible.

BEFORE

CHAPTER ONE

BEFORE

IF I told you everything that happened in my life before this little upset, you'd know too much about me. So I'm going to tell you only enough to give you an idea of what I looked like when I was running around like yourself.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

I had plenty of good times when I was up, and so I am content. I feel that I do know something about the outside world, even though I don't see much of it nowadays.

Take a look at me: About five feet ten inches tall, and broad shouldered, with dark hair (what's left of it), red cheeks (as a rule), and a sincere smile (always).

That smile—that was the most important thing of all. I know that if I had lost it I would have had an awful time, because when I was serious, *I was serious.* Often, because of that smile, it was difficult for people to believe me when I told them I was in earnest. At one stage of the game, in order to make them believe, I even thought

Illustration by

GRACE G. DRAYTON

There is room for much thought in this sketch of Grace G. Drayton's. It radiates sunshine. It tells of Friendship and of Sympathy. It illustrates Mind Power. Study the expressions and see if you see what I have seen.

FHDRATON

of removing the smile. But when I did banish the grin, I soon found out that it was best to bring it right back because unless I did, something really serious was sure to happen.

I was the kind of fellow who loves work, yet always finds time for play. In my own way, I enjoyed life and kept active. As a matter of fact, I believe I was very much

like most people who are up and running around, and who have never gone through an ordeal such as mine.

Most of us take life at its net worth. We work, we play, we accept that which is given us. Yet in return, as we must admit, we give but little thought to others unless some material benefit awaits us. We are ever willing to

accept, but not always so willing to give. Most of us expect Life to give us all it has to offer, yet how slow we are to surrender something in return! It is this trait which leads us to feel ourselves hugely wronged when Life, after giving much, turns about and makes a demand upon us. We are so used to receiving; and we so hate the thought of pay-

ing back! Such reluctance is common to all humanity, and it is largely to help others overcome that feeling that I am moved to tell you my story.

I was formerly, and I am now, just as human as the next fellow. I take in the fresh air, and sometimes the sunshine. I enjoy life as much as you do, and yet I

look upon it in a manner probably very different from yours.

Do you know why?

I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY

CHAPTER TWO

I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY

I'LL never forget the day —July the twenty-first, nineteen hundred and twenty-three, at about three thirty P.M. What a beautiful day it was! Just like most days are to most people—days we really don't appreciate—until—!

"IT CAN BE DONE"

The roads were clear; the sky a shade of light blue that blended perfectly with the harmonious tints of the green grass and the trees. The golden sun was high overhead and the cool breezes swept through our car as we went gliding along.

We were happy, very happy. There were eight of us, none giving a thought to

the morrow, all concerned only with the fact that we were on a vacation and having a good time—eight lucky people. Yes, eight lucky ones and not seven, as the others thought later.

It all happened before we knew it. A sudden turn in the road, a skid, and over we went! All thrown out, seven without a scratch! But I,

well, I was pinned under the two tons of metal which had once been an automobile. Thank God, it was I who was nipped! I knew even then I could fight misfortune better than the others. I was literally jack-knifed, bent completely in half with my legs over my head.

There I lay, face up under the old boat, with nothing but

blackness before my eyes and the words of my brother coming to my ears:

"Be brave, old boy! We'll get you out all right!"

My, what true words they were! For here I am, still fighting on! Yes, and I am going to continue to be brave as he told me.

There I lay, then, patiently waiting for two tons of steel

to be lifted from my broken bones. That I was suffering untold agony, torture which beggars description, surely you cannot fail to realize. For through it all I remained absolutely conscious. Though my heart was bleeding, though I was enduring the tortures of hell, I was determined to fight on.

I expected relief when

finally those two tons were removed, but instead there was only further agony. With the lifting of the weight, came the feeling that both my legs had been cut off. I yelled and yelled again and was quieted by the crowd only after they had convinced me I was wrong. My legs were not off; no, not exactly. But I had no feeling in them. The cur-

rent coming down the spine from the nervous system's power house had been cut off. The legs were still there—to look at.

People began to gather. It seemed as if the whole world had turned out to see me. Everybody wanted to get near me. I was the most important person in the universe. They picked me up from the sandy

road and placed me in the back of a big, private touring car, and then I went joy riding.

Yes, I said joy riding. Though enduring pain from waist to head—dying, everybody thought—I was in reality fighting my first battle. My mind had taken command, and in spite of my physical suffering my spirit rejoiced to real-

ize its strength. Poor flesh and bone were shattered, but the mind, stronger than they, still carried on.

I was carefully brought to the parlor of the only doctor within miles. Luckily, he had a telephone and an ironing board, for had it not been for these two implements my fight would have been much harder. There I lay, stretched out on

the board while the doctor did all he could to get an ambulance. I waited fully one hour, but all the while I was happy to think I was able to wait.

After the first ambulance arrived, a half dozen followed. It all made me feel very important—a motor-cycle policeman in front of me, another behind, the road cleared, all

traffic stopped—I tell you I was having a real day of it!

I was pretty dry by this time and, asking the doctor to stop, I put my pretty nurse to work.

"A bottle of ———."

It came, and it did taste good. No, I didn't get it all, but I did get a couple of drops now and then, though mostly then. I guess the

nurse's generosity was due to the circumstance that the trip to the hospital was so long. I believe it was something like fifteen or twenty miles.

You see, I am telling you all the details, but not to brag. If I keep stressing my pains and tortures it is only because I want you to realize that few persons have had more to fight against. I want you to have

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

HARRY HERSHFIELD

You can say what you want. "Abie the Agent" may be a tight business man, but he's got a darn big heart. Note the smile on his face—Why? He finds happiness in doing something for others.

I'LL RUN ERRANDS FOR SOL ANYTIME = POSITIVE!!
"HERSHFIELD"

all the facts, so that you will put this book down with the feeling, "Well, if that fellow won out, so can I!"

At last we reached the hospital.

"Take him to the dispensary; he won't live," said some one.

"Take him, hell!" said I. "You take me to a room and get some brains working!"

My order was obeyed. Carefully they took me from the ambulance and placed me upon a conveyor. Then, wheeling me to the elevator, they shot me up to a room on the first floor.

What was I in for next? It was supper time but really I didn't see anything worth chewing on, and so I was put to bed, like most bad little

boys, without anything to eat. I wasn't treated so very badly, though, for it wasn't long before I was taking a sun bath between the X-ray and the X-ray plates. After this I knew the "wild party" was nearly over; at least, I could almost call it a day. But whatever remained to be done, I was ready to go through with it, for my trust was in

God and my faith was founded.

I rested for an hour or so. By this time the operating surgeon summoned from New York was ready to honor me and another joy ride followed, this time to the operating room. There I received a first class shave. It was not the kind you are thinking about—not my face, but my back.

Next, I was signing a document permitting them to do with me as they wanted. I didn't read it, of course, but I'm sure that's what it was.

Soon a nurse was saying, "Breathe in; b r e a t h e in, slowly," and then I went off to dreamland.

From that time until two A.M. I don't know what went on, but they tell me a couple

of little bones were taken out of my back and away from my spinal cord.

Who cares? I don't miss 'em, anyhow!

At two A.M. I was conscious again and ready to finish the day's program. Two very charming ladies were holding my hands, and one of them said:

"You're all right now, Mr. Rothschild."

"I know it," I answered.

But even as I spoke I knew I wasn't. I couldn't even move. I was totally paralyzed from my waist down.

Don't you agree with me that "I'll never forget the day"?

THE FIRST FIVE NIGHTS

CHAPTER THREE

THE FIRST FIVE NIGHTS

YOU will never realize what those nights were like, not even after I have told you. I've heard people say that the first hundred years are the hardest, but, by golly! the first hundred years can have nothing on the first five

nights. Every minute was like five hours, and I can't remember having slept a wink. Pain, pain and more pain! Horror after horror came before me; torture after torture. I hardly could breathe. I felt as if the room had closed in on me. I was restless in mind but powerless to move my body. Ordinarily, a man in pain can ease himself by threshing

about on his cot, but when compulsory immobility is added to physical agony, the result is hell.

Probably, it was my own fault that I didn't get some sleep during those early nights, but I absolutely refused to let them lull my pains with dope. The very first night I made up my mind I wasn't going to start using that stuff. The

probable cause of this decision was my great fear of narcotics. As I lay there, I recalled some dreadful stories I had heard. Even eminent doctors, I remembered, had thrown their lives away by the use of drugs. I was horrified by these thoughts and I had already learned that there was something in life that was stronger than any drug—and that was

the Will. Dope represents the path of least resistance, and that's why people surrender to it and are murdered by it. They give up and do not offer fight.

So I did without drugs. And, of course, I did without sleep. I passed the nights praying for daylight. The hours of darkness were so long! Quiet as it was, each

little sound sent a creepy feeling through me. Pain seemed worse at night and the only relief came with the dawn. And thus, without narcotics, I fought my way through the first five nights, right up to the middle of the sixth, when, at last, I dropped off for a few hours of honest, healing slumber. What a relief! What a relief!

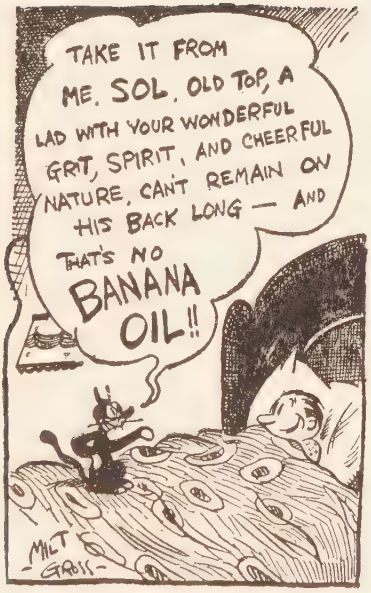
It seemed that my mind had scored a victory over my body. Each night thereafter I managed to get at least a little sleep, and, although it was many months before I reached the point where the nights didn't seem long drawn out, I knew that I was winning.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

MILT GROSS

By golly, Milt!—That cat's been meowing at me for the past two years and now I know what he's been trying to tell me.


TAKE IT FROM ME, SOL, OLD TOP, A LAD WITH YOUR WONDERFUL GRIT, SPIRIT, AND CHEERFUL NATURE, CAN'T REMAIN ON HIS BACK LONG — AND THAT'S NO BANANA OIL!!
MILT GROSS

DAYS THAT FOLLOWED

CHAPTER FOUR

DAYS THAT FOLLOWED

HERE I was, all tucked away under the blankets, motionless, in a strange town, and away from friends. But what d i f f e r e n c e did strangeness make, or the absence of friends? None, if you ask me, because, for a while,

at least, I was glad to be alone. Soon, however, this feeling left me and I looked forward to the days when I could see someone and have a chat. But this I knew was a pleasure I couldn't have for some time to come.

I spent most of the first two weeks in trying to keep cool. It was July, remember, and my, oh my! it was hot! And

to lie perfectly quiet made it still worse. The perspiration ran from my body, even with electric fans blowing on all sides, and most of the time I thought I was in swimming.

And the doctors! They stuck me with pins, and they pushed me and pressed me, and what not! Of course, I didn't feel a thing below the waist, so whatever they did to

my benumbed limbs was perfectly all right. But you can rest assured that I wouldn't let them get away with anything above the belt. To put anything over on me, they had to hit below the foul line, and so I was always getting the decision over them, too.

Two and a half weeks elapsed, and I began to grow lonely. I wanted to get back

home and see some friends. I wanted to know I was still in the world and part of it. I knew home itself was out of the question, so I had to be content with the alternative, a hospital near home, where, thank God! I knew I would at least see some one, some time.

It was a Wednesday morning when I was ready to leave

the Morristown (N. J.) Memorial Hospital for Brooklyn, and it was a long, long morning. Candidly speaking, I counted every second, and each seemed like an hour. I think that every ten minutes, at least, I asked if the ambulance had come, and every time I heard the clang of a bell or the honk of a horn I thought it was for me. Can you

imagine how many times I was disappointed within that one morning? Often enough, I'll say, to last me a lifetime. Finally at about twelve o'clock my bus pulled in, and gosh! wasn't I happy! I did everything but jump out of bed, and I'm sure I would have done that if it had been possible.

It took about ten people to

move me into the ambulance—or, maybe, there were more than ten. Who knows? I remember a great big crowd, with everybody saying, "Be careful, now," or "Handle him with care," or "Be careful of him," and for a while I thought I was a piece of china-ware, boxed for delivery and stamped: "Handle with care; this side up." If someone had

slipped, God knows I might have been broken into a thousand pieces.

Finally they got me into the "delivery truck," and quite a truck it was! I was handled with care, all right, and I was packed with care, too. They laid me in, like a sardine in its can, and off we went.

Looking back at it, I don't suppose I would have been so

eager for the trip if I had known what it was to be like. The road was as hot as the Devil's Land and the journey was as long as from Hong Kong to New York. Actually, it took five and a half hours and the distance was a little over fifty miles. Can you picture me, lying out flat on my back and traveling that distance only two and a half

weeks after an operation like mine?

They had to drive very slowly, for I felt every pebble in the road. There was none too much air in the car, either, and it was an added annoyance to have to struggle for breath. Naturally, I was glad enough when we reached the ferry to New York and felt the river breezes. But it wasn't the

sudden inrush of good fresh air, coming just in the nick of time, that gladdened me most; it was the realization that I was nearing home, nearing my family and friends. And, by the way, if horse-shoes really mean good luck, you may be interested to know that we found one just before leaving the Jersey shore.

Soon I found myself in

another hospital with new surroundings, new doctors, new nurses, and new fights. I guess it was the fighting, after all, that really kept me alive, and I really believe, too, that my inclination to fight was one of the things which made people glad to help me. They liked me because I was different from other people and didn't give them their own way.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

If I didn't want to do a thing, I didn't do it and that was all there was to it. But I always smiled, even when I fought. I never said, "No, I don't want to do that." I never said, "No, I won't do that." If I wanted to say, "No," I always let it sound like, "Yes." Suppose there was something I didn't want to eat. I'd simply remark,

"Please, nurse, isn't there something we could substitute for this?" or, "May I leave this for a little later?" The whole thing was concentration and psychology, such as an advertising man uses when trying to put over a campaign.

The six months that followed found me trying to cure a bed sore which I had in-

herited from Morristown and which almost carried me off into "No Man's Land" on several occasions. At one time it developed into gangrene and as the dead, poisoned flesh fell from me, my spine was laid bare. I soon saw that all my suffering would go for naught if this condition persisted and I took the situation into my own hands.

In desperation, I called one of the attending nurses to my bed.

"Go get a knife," I told her, "and cut away all that poisoned flesh. It will kill me if it stays there."

She refused.

"I daren't," she said; "it's against the rules of the hospital."

For a moment I was

stumped, but I renewed my appeals.

"No," she insisted. "It's against the rules. I can't. I won't."

I spoke to her again and every ounce of power I possessed went into that appeal. I used every artifice of salesmanship, every means of persuasion I could think of, and at last she gave in.

"Good," I whispered, and she hurried out of sight, to return a moment later with a sterilized scalpel, absorbent cotton and other necessaries. She worked swiftly, surely, capably, and before long the poisoned flesh was gone.

It left an opening in my back that you could have put your fist into, and again I had one leg in the grave and the

other on the banana peel. The problem now was to keep my back in a healthy state and to heal that gaping wound. It was a hard task, because, due to my paralysis, the flesh had little healing power. Every artificial means the doctors knew, they used. They baked it under a light which was supposed to have the properties of sunshine. They bathed

it, and they did many other things during the six months that elapsed before they finally healed it up.

All through this period I had to turn from side to side. I was not permitted to lie on my back, not even for ten minutes. The fact was that ten minutes of lying on my back would have done me more harm than could have been

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

JACK CALLAHAN

Comparatively speaking—
Jack is right. When hard
luck hits you, laugh it off.

DOWN, BUT NOT.
OUT.

cured in a week off of it. So, if I wanted ever to be well, I had to lie on my sides, and I did. I'd twist and turn, but no matter how uncomfortable I was, I'd never give in. I never tried to cheat the doctors when they weren't looking. I gave them every kind of co-operation. I'd always lay on my sides because I knew that if I cheated

the doctors, I'd be cheating myself.

During this interval I almost became an interne. Between my external troubles and my internal troubles I had a mighty good chance to learn the doctor's game. I don't mean to convey the idea that I was studying the science of medicine, for I wasn't, but in a general way I came to know

what to do for certain troubles, and in many instances it was a mighty good thing I did know. I was very observant, and if I had not been it might have been very costly for me at times.

I remember days when I made the interne change his sterilized gloves five times, and then, in addition, I'd tell him what to do next. He was

angry, of course, but he didn't dare come back at me because he knew I was right.

I fought whenever I had to. I fought with nurses, doctors, orderlies and everybody, and yet they called my room the "Sunshine Room," because I was always so happy. Even when I fought with them I made them smile, because it

was with a smile that I fought. I laid plans for every fight, and then I carried out those plans.

Everybody in the hospital used to love my room and I always had plenty of company. I guess I knew every nurse and doctor from the ground floor up, and whenever a visiting physician came to the hospital, he always visited me.

A good part of this time, I spent in trying to move my legs, but somehow I couldn't even get a quiver out of them. But I never gave up hope and kept right on trying, just as I am trying to-day.

I had many other things to think about, too, for I saw patients come and go. I saw patients of every description—young and old, fat and slim—

all kinds; patients all cut up, and patients who were just sick; patients who would lie and cry for drugs and who in their pain were crazed. I saw sights I want never to see again—sights that have made me think deeply. I saw patients who would help the doctors and themselves by fighting, and I saw others who would give in and

give up, almost without a struggle.

After observing a hundred or so, I was able to tell just what kind of scrapper a patient was the minute I placed my eyes on him. I'll admit I wasn't always right, but in most cases I was; and if I had been betting on it, I am sure I would have come out away ahead.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

What stories I could tell you about those people who wouldn't fight! I am sure it is almost needless for me to say that in the majority of cases they lost. They lost from the start, even without one bit of effort to win. They just took the attitude: "Here's the condition, doctor; what are you going to do for it?" They left everything to their doctors,

and I fervently pity all doctors who have such patients.

But let me not bore you with the unpleasant side of hospital life. Let me tell you something of the many joys that hospitals offer.

I had loads of sport at night—trying to put myself to sleep, for instance. I am sure I played not less than twenty and sometimes as many as fifty

games of checkers each night before I finally dropped off, usually to doze for only a couple of hours. Checkers wasn't my only soporific. Slap-jack was also very popular. You know that game, don't you? You divide a pack of casino cards into two piles and lay them face down on the table. The dealer plays first, taking one card from his pile

and laying it face up. The second player does likewise, laying his card upon the one the dealer has just played. Dealer and opponent then continue, p l a y i n g alternately, until a court card is turned, at which point the person first crying, "Slap jack!" wins all the cards thus far turned up. The winner puts these cards at the bottom of his own pile,

and play proceeds as before until all the cards are in one hand. Can you imagine playing such a dumb game as that hour after hour? Yet I would play and play until I couldn't hold my head up, and then, Z—Z —zz—zz— z—z—z . . . off to the hay!

There was much joy, too, in trying to cheer up others who were less fortunate than

"IT CAN BE DONE"

I. I was sorry to see them down, and while it is true that I was down as well, I guess I looked upon such things in a much different manner.

The other sports we had were many, and I think you'd like to know of them. We actually went back to our kid days and played "Cops and Robbers." You know that game, of course. We patients

were always the robbers and most of the time the cops had us locked up. At least, that's what it seemed like. We were awakened in the morning with bells, we washed with bells, we ate with bells, and we went to sleep with bells. I guess we did everything to the sound of a gong. What's more, we even had numbers reminiscent of Convict 999. For instance, I

was Number 69, and not Sol Rothschild. With nurses and doctors it was, "Do this for 69," "Do that for 69," or "How's 69 to-day?"

By this time I was getting sick of my "hotel" and all my servants, and I didn't seem to be making much progress. All I needed was a good excuse to get out of it, and *I did get that excuse!*

"IT CAN BE DONE"

One Sunday morning my Dad met my doctor right outside my door. This is the conversation I overheard:

"Good morning, doctor."

"Good morning, Mr. Rothschild."

"Well, doctor, how's the boy?"

"Why, fine, Mr. Rothschild."

"Doctor, what do you think about his legs?"

"Well, Mr. Rothschild, there is no use in my fooling you. Get him a wheel-chair and be content."

That was all I needed to hear. Quick as a flash a picture came to my mind, a picture of a very dear friend of mine, seated in a wheel-chair. So I was to end like that, too, was I? I was horror stricken and sent into a state of de-

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

RUBE GOLDBERG

Don't be "afraid," doctor, *I will get well.*

WHY DO YOU LOOK SO SAD, DOCTOR? DID YOU LOSE A PATIENT?
WORSE THAN THAT - SOL ROTHSCHILD HAS MADE A LIAR OUT OF ME - I'M AFRAID HE'S GOING TO GET WELL

pression. I weakened for a moment, my heart throbbed, but then, as if some great power had filled me, I plucked up courage. I thought calmly, and before long my mind was made up. I decided to leave the hospital.

The next Saturday found me ready to go home. Yes, the doctor was surprised, but what was the sense of my los-

ing any more time? He couldn't do anything for me. He had condemned me to a wheel-chair and, naturally, I didn't agree with him. It was high time for me to move.

Saturday it rained pitchforks. It was really a dangerous day for me to leave, but even in the face of serious eventualities, mere rain could not offset my determination to

get home. It was a hard trip and indeed a very unpleasant one, but all the discomforts of travel were as nothing compared to my great joy in knowing that I was home at last.

EVERYBODY I KNEW

CHAPTER FIVE

EVERYBODY I KNEW

HOME! I was greeted by everybody I knew. I didn't count 'em all, but the house was crowded. How happy I was! The true friendship which had brought scores to my bedside during my eight months in the hospital was

again demonstrated. I knew these friends who gathered for my home-coming were true friends. They had stuck to me through it all, and they are still sticking to-day.

I have a wealth of friends, such as all the money in the world can't buy, and if you have friends of your own you can consider yourself mighty lucky and mighty wealthy.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

A man never knows how rich he is when he has friends, nor does he know how poor he is without them. He may be rich in gold and possess luxuries, but without friends a man is a darned poor man.

Let me tell you just a little more about my friends. This fight of mine would have been much harder if it had not been for the folks who helped

me keep up my spirit. On days when I was a little down in the mouth some friend was sure to pop in and cheer me up. Without them this fight would have been tough. My friends battled just as valiantly as I did; probably not in the same way, but they fought nevertheless. And they are still fighting and winning with me; God bless them all!

They are setting an example to all mankind.

The whole world loves such people as my friends are, for they are fighters as well as lovers. Who doesn't love a fighter, and who doesn't love a lover? Give me my health and my friends and the world is mine to share with others.

WHEN THE DOCTORS COULDN'T, I COULD

CHAPTER SIX

WHEN THE DOCTORS COULDN'T, I COULD

UP to this time I had twenty-five doctors on my case, and what they didn't do for me, and what they couldn't do for me, would fill a great many books. They did lots of things to me, but

they surely didn't do a good many things they might have done. But please don't blame the doctors. They just didn't know any better. Poor fellows! They meant well enough, all of them! My case was a very unusual one, and if they didn't know what to do next, you can't blame them.

But all the while they were fishing around and trying to

find out what to do, I was doing it. I never said a word to any of them. I just kept on thinking, and that's the reason I had twenty-five doctors, as you soon shall see.

God bless them all! They did whatever they could, but so did I. I fired them and I kept on firing them, and all the while I kept on telling myself I was getting better. That

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by
KEN KLING

What kin a fellow do? A real live tip from Joe and not a mean bookie in sight to take my bet.

LISSEN, SOL, OLD KID - I'M SOME BABY AT PICKIN' SURE THING'S - AN' IT'S A 1 TO 10 SHOT THAT YOU'LL BE OUT OF THAT HAYSTACK PRETTY SOON!
KING
Best wishes from everybody in New York, and we know your book will be a knockout —.

was the one thing I wanted to know and it was the one thing the doctors didn't tell me.

One doctor I'll think of for the rest of my life. He left quite an impression upon me. He was the fellow, by the way, who told my Dad to be content to see me in a wheel-chair. He was a brilliant man, there was no doubt about that, but he simply couldn't do anything

for me. But why do you suppose he impressed me so? I'll tell you.

He would always come to my room with a jolly:

"Good morning, Sol! How do you feel?"

My answer, almost invariably, was, "Wonderful!"

And that was the end of his visit!

Well, anyhow, what these

doctors didn't do for me, they did me for, so what's the difference?

Thank God again, that I rid myself of all these fellows and was able to get to dear old "Home, Sweet Home!"

GOOD TIMES AHEAD

CHAPTER SEVEN

GOOD TIMES AHEAD

IT was one week before New Year's Day when I came home, and so I had to start the New Year right. And I did.

The first thing was to call in a couple of new doctors, because I really didn't believe

what the other doctors had told me, and I certainly wouldn't have believed the new doctors either, if their reports had not been favorable.

They laid me out flat and marked me up from head to foot and from back to front with colored pencils. When they were all t h r o u g h I actually looked like the map of the world. I could locate al-

most any city and my veins looked exactly like flowing rivers.

At last I was in the hands of two doctors who agreed with me! At last I heard some one say that the possibilities were there! It made me feel good, because I had always believed things were going to be all right.

From that very day on, con-

ditions seemed to improve, not only insofar as the doctors were concerned, but in every way. From that very day on, I convinced myself more and more that "It could be done," and that a good part of any man's cure was in his own mind.

As the days rolled by I found myself working hard, trying to get action in my legs.

For many months I saw no results at all, not even the slightest tremor. In fact, I could not even get a nerve impulse to go through the muscles. It was a case of very heavy concentration, of actually coaxing the muscles to work. It was a case of "going after it till I got it," just as a good salesman goes after business. Each day I would

keep at it, and though I had no response at first, there came a day when I finally succeeded in getting a slight flicker here and there. It was no easy task, I can tell you, and it might well have discouraged the majority of persons long before.

As more time went by, I even learned how to get some of the muscles to work. In

many instances it took weeks and even months before I could make just the slightest motion. But once I had that much, the rest came right along. Slowly, ever so slowly! But I never gave up, for I had learned that the mind could overpower the body.

This work required absolute concentration, and it necessitated full use of every ounce

of mind power I had. I would have myself locked up in a room and then I would throw off all the bed clothes, leaving myself in a state of September Morn. Then I would go to work.

The work consisted first, of forming mental pictures of that which I wanted certain muscles to do, and second, of trying to carry the pictures into

reality by forcing an impulse through the nervous system in an attempt to have the muscles do what the mind was picturing.

I must say it was work which was a great deal harder than that which the average well person does during his or her daily routine. If you want to get an idea of what it's like just try to move one of your

own muscles while remembering that mine were paralyzed. If anything distracted my attention while I was going through this operation, all my work would go for naught. The least sound was enough to upset my efforts and completely derail the picture trolley car going from the mind to the muscle.

And that's that, and now

you know how I managed to keep myself very, very busy.

I didn't spend all my time trying to regain the use of my legs, though, for I always managed to have some recreation. In this the radio aided much, and.so did the telephone. Thanks to the people who made them possible!

I get the news of the day, music when I want it, base-

ball, football, or anything else, so what more does a fellow need? You say a good, soft bed? Well, I have that, too, and I have learned how to sleep in it, which is something I didn't know when I was up and running around. It is more than lots of well people know, and if knocking about taught me how to stay out of bed, this a c c i d e n t has

taught me how to make use of it.

I may not be walking around, just yet, but I am going to, surely, and I am going to do anything else in life that I may want to. And what is more, you can do the same.

Because . . .

DETERMINATION

CHAPTER EIGHT

DETERMINATION

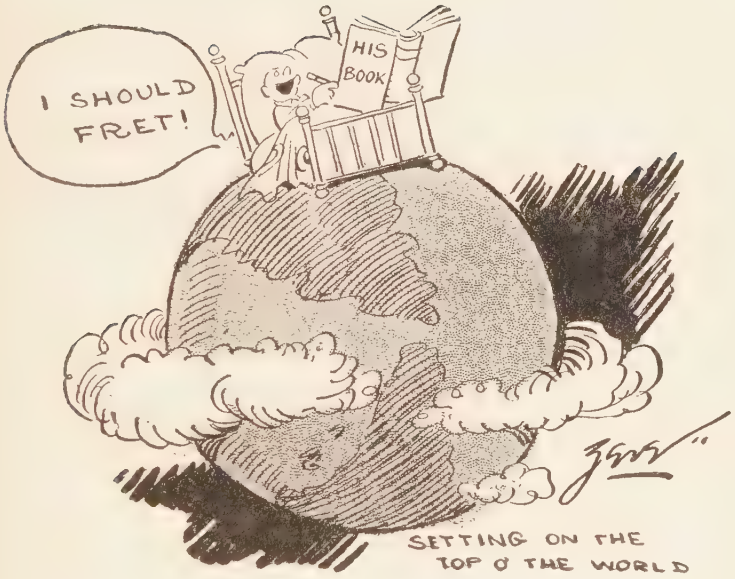
DETERMINATION to do a thing is half the battle won. No matter how impossible that which you determine to do may appear, no matter if the whole world says it is impossible, you will achieve it if you but make up

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

AL ZERE

When you're setting on top
of the world it requires hard,
earnest work to stay there,
and don't forget it!!


I SHOULD FRET!
HIS BOOK
SETTING ON THE TOP O' THE WORLD

your mind to do so. It may take heaps and heaps of time, but if you stick you are bound to win.

If you have the power of your own mind you cannot fail to come out on top, for there is no power so great as mind power.

Mind power will do things that even our greatest dynamos can't do. Mind power is

the stuff that is keeping the world going, and without it we could not exist. Start today to train your mind to attain that one big thing in life. Stick to the job and never give up, no matter how long it takes. See if you don't come out on top.

Determine now to do that one thing,
  Get it well fixed in your mind;
Start the ball a-rollin' early
  And don't lose a bit of your time.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Keep right at it! Keep right at it!
Keep plugging, and don't give in!
Hope a little and pray a little,
Determine and fight, and you'll win.

Just to get an idea how determined I was, read these letters. They come from the doctor who operated on me. One was written almost a year after my operation and the other four months later.

June 25, 1924.

My dear Rothschild:

I was indeed very much pleased to

get your letter and hear how nicely you are doing. I have always felt that you would walk, largely due to your own efforts and persistence. This has helped you a great deal and you surely deserve to do nicely because of the fight you have made.

It will be a great pleasure for me to see you come walking into my office and you can feel that you have a standing appointment.

My best wishes to your Mother and Father and I shall be glad to know of your progress.

Sincerely,

(Signed) E. P. Weigel.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

September 4, 1924.

My dear Sol.:

It was indeed a pleasure to receive your note to-day enclosing your latest photograph. I want to congratulate you. You certainly look fit to take a round out of Jack Dempsey at any time, and I am more than pleased to know you are doing so nicely. You may rest assured that our appointment still holds good and outside of yourself I shall be more pleased than anyone else to have you keep it.

I am always pleased to hear from you and feel sure that your courage and determination will be rewarded

by a return of function in your legs.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ELMER P. WEIGEL.

DOCTOR NATURE

CHAPTER NINE

DOCTOR NATURE

ONE of the best doctors I ever had was Doctor Nature. He had a tonic which did me more good than anything. His prescription was always very much the same, and I'm sure no matter who his patients are

he prescribes the same ingredients.

I can't help mentioning him to you because I believe he could make anybody well. In addition to prescribing his tonic, he has only one other order for his patients, and that is, "Keep the mind in good form." By that he means the patient is to keep the mind saying, "I'm getting better,"

until the mind actually overpowers the body and the body really does feel better.

Doctor Nature was the least expensive of all my doctors and he did a whole lot for me. His services were free, and I could call him as often as I wanted him. He was always glad to come out and I'm sure he saved my life many a time.

I highly recommend Doctor

Nature to anyone and if you want to know where to get him and what he prescribes, look at his prescription blank.

What's more, Doctor Nature is the sort of fellow who will work with any other doctor you may have. You won't have to be afraid of professional jealousy. Doctor Nature will never be displeased no matter what you say to any

DR. NATURE
"ALL OVER THE WORLD"

HOURS	PHONE
24 Per Day	Call Me From
No Appointments	Any Place
Necessary	Any Time

℞

Keep the system clean

Drink plenty of water

Get all the sunshine you can

Get all the fresh air you can

Rest in proportion

Keep the mind active

Eat plenty

Be cheerful

Mix Well

Take every day and every night —

Dr. Nature

other doctor, and he will always co-operate.

So please remember Doctor Nature. He will always be a good fellow to call into any consultation.

COURAGE AND ITS REWARD

CHAPTER TEN

COURAGE AND ITS REWARD

"A man who gives up before the job is finished will never know the many pleasures derived from a finished job."

THOUGH the road be very hilly and the pathway hard to find, every man must have the courage of his own convictions. Determine

what you are going to do, as I told you in an earlier chapter of this book, and then have the courage to go through with it. Courage to go through with a thing is the last half of any battle, and it is the winning point.

No man ever reaped the rewards of a good fight who didn't have courage.

I myself would not be re-

ceiving the many pleasures of life if I had lacked courage. I would not be half as far as I am. I would not be doing what I am doing now.

Let me show you exactly what courage did for me. I told you when I came home from the hospital—just before the New Year, 1924. Well, that was approximately six months from the date of my

accident and at that time I was motionless. The time of this writing is November, 1924, or eleven months since I came home from the hospital and about seventeen months since the day of my outing. I am now moving both hips, both knees, both ankles slightly, and the toes on my left foot. But that isn't all. I am so strong at the hips that I am able to

lift both legs off the bed with ease. Wouldn't you consider these gains trophies enough for having courage? Don't you believe that I am deriving loads and loads of pleasure from this progress? And don't you believe it's made a good many others happy, as well? I should say it has, and what's more, all doctors now agree that I will walk again, and I,

too, say I will walk again. So there!

It may be a long, long time yet, but I'm sure my constant efforts, my fight to put mind over matter, my determination and my courage will pull me out all right. And so will my doctors, who are doing their share to help me win the fight I'll never give up.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

This list includes Doctor Nature, of course, and those whom I now shall name.

TO MY DOCTORS
PAST AND PRESENT

CHAPTER ELEVEN

TO MY DOCTORS PAST AND PRESENT

THE list of doctors whom I had was long indeed, but I prefer to mention just a few. To the others, God bless 'em all, they meant well! Many thanks!

To these few I owe much:

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Dr. Elmer P. Weigel, Assistant Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at the Post Graduate Hospital of New York, who operated upon me and saved my life.

Dr. Morris T. Koven, Associate Orthopedist at the Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn and the Brownsville and East New York Hospital of Brooklyn, who is responsible for the functional restoration of motion in my legs.

Dr. Charles Solomon, Assistant Attending Physician at the Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn; Neurologist to the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of Brooklyn; Instructor in

Pathology at the New York University and Bellevue Hospital Medical College, whose untiring efforts were responsible for keeping my system in good condition.

Dr. Isador Abrahamson, Clinical Professor of Neurology at New York University and Bellevue Hospital Medical College; Neurologist to Montefiore Hospital; Associate Neurologist at Mount Sinai Hospital; Consulting Neurologist to the Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn, etc., etc., whose careful guidance has been of inestimable value.

Alex Rothschild, my beloved brother, whose expert massage work,

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

CHIC YOUNG

Don't mistake this kick. It isn't the kind you're thinking of. It's just to show the doctors what kind of a good job they've done.

MD
MD
CHICYOUNG

guided by Dr. Koven, and whose everlasting efforts have kept my legs in good trim.

Max Leider, a nurse who did much for me.

To these few I wish to extend my gratitude and best wishes. God bless them all! And also the forty nurses, the twelve orderlies, the hall boys, the cooks, the firemen, and all the rest!

A POSITIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE

CHAPTER TWELVE

A POSITIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE

I SUPPOSE that when you read the heading of this chapter you'll think I'm crazy. Well, I'm not. I know the truth of what I am going to say here, just as well as you know you are reading.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

I am going to get every muscle in my legs to move, and I am going to walk!

I base this assertion upon my accomplishments up to this date, and I haven't the slightest doubt I will be able to make good.

After all, life is exactly what one makes it, and if you determine to have your future a path of roses, so shall you have

it. And, also, if you think of the road ahead as strewn with cobblestones, you are simply putting obstacles in your path. Start now to make your future a happy one. Start now to build the tall oaks of to-morrow. Plant the acorns to-day.

THANK GOD

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THANK GOD

Suppose you're very poor
And you've nothing much to eat—
Thank God that it isn't worse!

Suppose you're very rich
And you can't eat very much—
Thank God that it isn't worse!

Suppose you met disaster,
Yet you lived to see it through—
Thank God that it wasn't worse!

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Oh, suppose and suppose
And suppose and suppose—
THANK GOD! For it might
be worse!

YES, be happy and thank God for whatever He has given you. There are always thousands who are much worse off than you, but who, in another way, are much better off because they have learned to make the best of things. Have a smile and a

good word for your neighbor, and your neighbor will have a smile and a good word for you. The whole world will turn into pleasures and sunshine and you will find that life is worth living, even if everyone else tells you you are going to die. Life is given to us, and it is up to us to make it as we want it.

BE AN OPTIMIST

MD.
MD.
CHICYOUNG

guided by Dr. Koven, and whose everlasting efforts have kept my legs in good trim.

Max Leider, a nurse who did much for me.

To these few I wish to extend my gratitude and best wishes. God bless them all! And also the forty nurses, the twelve orderlies, the hall boys, the cooks, the firemen, and all the rest!

A POSITIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE

CHAPTER TWELVE

A POSITIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE

I SUPPOSE that when you read the heading of this chapter you'll think I'm crazy. Well, I'm not. I know the truth of what I am going to say here, just as well as you know you are reading.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

I am going to get every muscle in my legs to move, and I am going to walk!

I base this assertion upon my accomplishments up to this date, and I haven't the slightest doubt I will be able to make good.

After all, life is exactly what one makes it, and if you determine to have your future a path of roses, so shall you have

it. And, also, if you think of the road ahead as strewn with cobblestones, you are simply putting obstacles in your path. Start now to make your future a happy one. Start now to build the tall oaks of to-morrow. Plant the acorns to-day.

THANK GOD

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THANK GOD

Suppose you're very poor
  And you've nothing much to eat—
    Thank God that it isn't worse!

Suppose you're very rich
  And you can't eat very much—
    Thank God that it isn't worse!

Suppose you met disaster,
  Yet you lived to see it through—
    Thank God that it wasn't worse!

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Oh, suppose and suppose
And suppose and suppose—
THANK GOD! For it might
be worse!

YES, be happy and thank God for whatever He has given you. There are always thousands who are much worse off than you, but who, in another way, are much better off because they have learned to make the best of things. Have a smile and a

good word for your neighbor, and your neighbor will have a smile and a good word for you. The whole world will turn into pleasures and sunshine and you will find that life is worth living, even if everyone else tells you you are going to die. Life is given to us, and it is up to us to make it as we want it.

BE AN OPTIMIST

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

BE AN OPTIMIST

IF you're running around and in good health, or if you are down under the blankets, don't be a chronic grumbler and don't go around with a perpetual frown. In other words, don't be a pessimist. Be an optimist. Instead of

frowning, smile, even if it hurts, because a smile will get you where a frown won't.

I have found this to be so, especially since my accident. I have seen patients in hospitals almost ignored because they were cranks, while I, on the other hand, could get almost anything I wanted. It wasn't because the doctors or the nurses had any more heart

for me than for the habitual grumblers, but it was because I asked with a smile for whatever I wanted, and I never complained about my ailments. I either had a word of good cheer, or I didn't talk at all. When I wasn't in trouble, I certainly didn't look for it; and when I was in trouble, it was my optimism and a good big smile that got me out.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Illustration by

J. W. McGURK

Mr. McGurk's Title needs no further remarks. I fully agree with him.

One of these days

"IT CAN BE DONE"

The whole world will love you if you can become a good whitewasher, but you've got to use the whitewash tactfully.

WHEN I REFLECT

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WHEN I REFLECT

ONE can hardly imagine how I feel about the whole thing, but I'm glad I went through it. I honestly am. I don't mean to convey to you that I would like to go through it again or that anyone else ought to go through

a trial of this kind to learn what I have learned, but I do mean that I wouldn't change my experience for millions. What I learned about life in the past months will certainly make me "live" when I get up, for I will have a greater appreciation of everything. I will live with nature in the great wide open. I will live to help others live. I will live

to show others how to live, and why they are living.

For one thing, I shall tell people how important it is to be thrifty. I am a living example of thrift, because that which I had stored away for a rainy day kept many a worry from my mind. I realize now what it means to be thrifty, just as I realize the meaning of many other facts of life.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

When I look back it seems as if the whole thing had happened but a few days since, not many months ago. It seems as if my progress has been made almost overnight—not something for which I have had to fight and fight and fight. When I get up, my time in bed will be like one big dream to me, except that I will have a bigger and

broader vision of life and of the mysterious workings of Our Supreme Being—something I might never have had, were it not for this fight.

So far, it has been a darned good fight, and I am going to keep on, with more and more speed ahead, because I know "IT CAN BE DONE."

I hope you'll agree with me.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

Have faith in your God and adopt this slogan for the rest of your life.

"IT CAN BE DONE"

#1 Brooklyn author & subject / imprint

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 4444 05270 0804

from
Jay

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY
Central Service
Grand Army Plaza
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11238